

# Most Practical Exhibition in Automobile History Was Herald of National Progress

## Westward the Motor Show Takes Its Flight

Largest and Most Successful National Exhibition of Automobiles Ever Held Closed at the Grand Central Palace Last Night.

By HANK CALDWELL.

The automobile test for the day is "Sleep, blessed sleep, until 6 p.m." This is the one day in the year when the Live Wires in the great American automobile industry are dead to the world.

The sixteenth National Automobile Show, so far as New York is concerned, is a thing of the merry past. Chicago can now have a look on the latest models.

The public may not have had enough of these mechanical marvels. From the way it kept up its procession to the Grand Central Palace until the closing bell sounded the last "get out" it is evident that still another week of the show would have been enjoyed. But as for the several thousand weary salesmen, engineers and wealth laden manufacturers, they are glad to get a rest.

To the trade a national automobile show means eating ten times more food than is necessary and answering ten thousand foolish questions.

There was enough good food wasted last week on automobile banquets to feed all the starving Belgians for a year. But this was in the interest of the public welfare, the first and foremost for the designer of the "live over" body that we always have certain motoring devotees who wear the best of silk stockings and the feathered rumble will unquestionably appeal to them. It is a body designed for the athletic girl. For those who do not wear skating skirts the stockings can't be too tight or the union suit. They are snug and stylish when you put them on, but most of our ladies are too closely packed to do much step-ladder work while motoring.

The car selling for \$400 or less does not seem to have made much progress during the last year. The reason is evident. The man who can pay no more than \$300 is looking for a reliable car with service attached, and no maker has yet touched Henry Ford in this field.

Out in Detroit, Indianapolis and Cleveland these automobile fellows work sixteen hours a day on a glass of buttermilk, and when they come to New York to attend the automobile shows they have to devour everything on Broadway.

And how they do after the sun goes down! They want to know a real kindred to one of those boys from Detroit just anchor a couple of quarts of raw oysters at his dock and leave him alone. And when it comes to broiled sea bass they leave nothing but the bones. For breakfast they prefer a lobster salad and sleep like logs on a bunch of deviled crab.

But despite the fact that they all went home today full of filth of soul, they did not great woe of it and can look forward to the big business year.

Although many of the new models were announced during the past summer they were really launched at this wonderfully successful show, at least the salesmen drank enough headache water to launch them in and they are now sailing away in large numbers toward the coast.

The show was chock full of business from the moment it opened until it closed. It was not alone retail business.

Half a dozen big producers said they had never seen the equal of the wholesale business. I think it was Harry W. Ford, president of the Saxon company, who said the sixteenth annual show would go down in history as the "train-load show," because in many districts buyers bought cars by the trainload.

Nothing More to Say.

But I am wondering what the automobile advertising and publicity men are going to talk about when the rest of the winter. Howard Marmon has started with his Car of Mystery from which he has created eleven him and dined pounds.

We have heard so much about aluminum pistons and engines can hardly hope to hold our attention much longer on this line.

The Studebaker Corp. has dangled us with the Gold Medal. Now Chapman has 5,700 cars. The life history of his wonderful Super-Six, Hugh Chalmers has astonished us with his high-speed motors.

We are so familiar with the meaning of the Cadillac Coat of Arms we could read it backward without the book, and we feel that it is now a part of our own family tree.

John Willys has astounded us with his tales of war production. We can hardly look an Orville Wright in the face without exclaiming "a thousand cars a day."

Mr. Vincent, of the Packard, has picked his Twin-Six apart for our edification, and we are well aware that a man must have at least a dozen cylinders under his hood before he can be perfectly happy.

Nobdy can possibly stick us now on the matter of cylinders. Nobody can step up in a running conversation on cam shafts and valves in the head. Torque is our middle name and you could not mix us up on reciprocating parts.

We are away up on everything about an automobile, but what we cannot understand is why we can make a good automobile that will last for several years for fifty cents a pound when gasoline costs five cents a gallon, and only lasts an hour.

### A Practical Show.

The technical experts tell us it was a very practical show. In other words, there were few freaks like cycle cars. Every vehicle on display was of standard and tread.

At the same time there were many evidences of advancement. The Ferguson, a self-lubricating novelty, built by J. B. Ferguson, of Belfast, Ireland, attracted all the engineers.

Mr. Ferguson exhibited a beautiful chassis, and he has been producing complete cars in Ireland for about \$5,000. His object in coming to the United States is to get in touch with a manufacturer who can produce the car in quantity.

The engineers who examined the chassis think it is about two years ahead of the times. It is the natural viewpoint for our engineers because they have never attempted anything along this line.

Mr. Ferguson has done something out of the ordinary, and his car will probably be considered an advanced ideal until a manufacturer who can produce it in quantity turns the car out at a popular price.

We will come to the self-lubricating car just as we have the self-starting car, but in America we always reach every point from a practical, commercial approach. If some man who knows how to do big things in the right way, like John Willys, Hugh Chalmers or Ray Owen, will introduce the Easy-to-Oil machine you will see the other producers jumping into line in short order.

Howard Marmon has given us a new inspiration in the light-weight car and Ray Owen is making great strides with his car of a thousand speeds.

The predominating thing this year is the demountable top, and next year the builder who does not show a car of this type will lose an immense amount of trade.

The four-seated roadster has also hit upon a new demand. It reaches the man who wants a car for more than two and who still holds out against the touring body.

The doorless runabout introduced by the Script-Booth Company, is extremely scriptuous. There are two steps

## SECRET OF LOWER COST OF MOTORS

Without Labor Saving Devices Cars Would Still Be Rated as Luxuries.

By C. A. PFEFFER, Vice-President Chalmers Co.

In measuring the tremendous strides made in manufacturing methods during the past ten years, I know of no more graphic gauge than the automobile catalogues issued even so recently as 1910 and those of the present day.

We find the motorist of that date paying \$2,000 and more for a motor car, and then making an additional outlay of several hundred dollars for accessories. Looking back at his cars of that date, it would seem as though the automobile buyer had been woefully overcharged. And yet, such was not the case. Motor car makers were not nearly so prosperous then as they are to-day, mainly because wasteful manufacturing methods cut deeply into the annual dividends.

Standing out as the one big miracle of the industry has been the constant mechanical and artistic improvement of the modern car, and the simultaneous drop in price all along the line. Without quantity production, made possible by automatic machinery, this miracle could never have taken place. Automatic machinery has done more toward lowering costs in automobile factories than any other single factor. Systematic methods of production came later, and were almost an outgrowth of the automatic idea.

### Automobile's Lower Cost.

To the great number of visitors who annually inspect the Chalmers factory, the most interesting departments of the entire plant are those employing machines of the labor-saving and self-operating type. Examples of some of these machines which seem to possess an uncanny power, coupled with absolute accuracy, into the automatic screw machines is fed bar steel, out of them comes the finished product—magneto couplings, springs, bolts, rocker arms, screws and similar parts; in fact, one-fourth of all the small parts which go into an automobile.

As many as thirteen operations are performed on a single part. The machines are self-operative to the extent that one man can divide his attention among six machines. It is difficult to estimate just how many men would be necessary under old-fashioned methods to keep up with the daily production of battery of automotives.

Machinery of this type is now being used by the munition factories in the manufacture of spherical powder, the high cost of production is also being reduced.

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C. A. PFEFFER, VICE-PRESIDENT CHALMERS CO.



Youngest Motor Car Executive at Automobile Show.

Typical of the wonderful opportunities found in the automobile industry is the career of C. A. Pfeffer, Vice President and Assistant General Manager of the Chalmers Motor Company.

Mr. Pfeffer, who has just celebrated his twenty-ninth birthday, is generally considered to be the youngest man in the industry holding the important position of Vice President in a motor company.

Joining the Chalmers Company eight years ago as an accountant, his rise to his present position was a rapid one. He became successively auditor, treasurer, and finally Vice President and Assistant General Manager.

During the short space of eight years Mr. Pfeffer has witnessed a growth of the Chalmers Company from a concern employing a few hundred men to a gigantic factory of 5,000 men, and representing a value of over \$8,000,000 in buildings and equipment.

In milling and lathe work the motorist again witnesses methods whereby the cost of his car is lessened. Several of the largest ingot-milling machines at the Chalmers factory have a capacity of 150 complete cylinder blocks a day. These machines carry out a kind of semi-automatic performance operations at the same time. A spindle drill just installed bores forty-four holes in the aluminum flange for

the running board in one operation. All of these machines are built to a standard of accuracy which renders their work correct to the 1/1,000th of an inch.

To obtain the best results in fender work the Chalmers company has installed a fender press which cost \$20,000. Formerly to secure the hand-some curved fenders now in vogue it

was necessary to have skilled artisans hammering them in sheet metal for hours at a time. On this new fender press the attendant merely places a sheet of metal under the hammer, and a weight of 175 tons descends, pressing the metal into a die and turning out a fender of unsurpassed beauty. The entire operation consumed but a few moments.

"Since I first conceived this idea of streamlining the traffic codes for the larger cities, and presented the thought for what it was worth, to some of my newspaper friends, I have been gratified to learn that it has been rather generally accepted by both motorists and pedestrians as a possible solution of their present difficulties. I have been flattered by notifications from numerous people of prominence over the country stating that they would take pleasure in co-operating with me.

"Yet the conditions which those laws are supposed to govern are not different as the variety of the laws governing them would lead one to believe. A uniform code of traffic laws, which would do more to stimulate the automobile industry. Automobiles and inventions have advanced and the arts had multiplied a world in which human processes had been marching at double quick while he was nodding and napping in the arms of Morphous.

"In no art, in no industry, would be witness a greater revolution than the revolution that that which characterizes the automobile and the automobile industry. When he first began there was no automobile. True, for more than a century inventive genius had been dipping into the future as far as human eye could see."

"True, evolution with intermittent constancy had been preparing for 'all the wonders that should be.' Between the log wheel of the primitive man and Trevithick's rickety locomotive of 1802 there were many cycles of progress.

"There has been much progress from Trevithick's clumsy automobile to the Packard and Pierce-Arrow of this later date.

"Standing at the junction of Fifth Avenue and Broadway, comparing the vehicles of the present day with those of twenty years ago, Van Winkle would be overwhelmed with confusion.

"Not only would such a code prove a great boon to the motor tourist but to the strange pedestrian. It is a real need, and with the increase of travel America is being felt more than ever before.

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